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ABSTRACT

A 3-year pilot bilingual program based on the Manitoba curriculum was evaluated to determine the degree to which program objectives had been achieved. The program uses Ukrainian as the language of instruction for 100% of the time in kindergarten and for 50% of the time in grades 1 and 2. The study investigated the following: (1) the extent to which students had acquired skills in Ukrainian language arts, English language arts, and the primary school program as a whole; (2) students' awareness of Ukrainian cultural heritage in Canada; and (3) attitudes of parents, teachers, principals, and superintendents toward the program. The first objective was measured by tests, teachers' progress reports, and comparisons of test scores with scores of children in the regular program; objectives 2 and 3 were studied by questionnaires and interviews. Tests indicated that, after 2 years of instruction, children had average scores above 70% in understanding, speaking, and reading Ukrainian. Differences in average scores in English language skills and in regular program subjects between bilingual and regular program children were not considered significant. Parents and teachers reported that the children had developed a greater awareness of Ukrainian cultural heritage. Generally, all adult groups were found to be satisfied with the program and wanted it extended through grade 6. (AMH)

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AN EVALUATION OF THE FIRST TWO YEARS OF THE ENGLISH-UKRAINIAN BILINGUAL PROGRAM: SUMMARY REPORT

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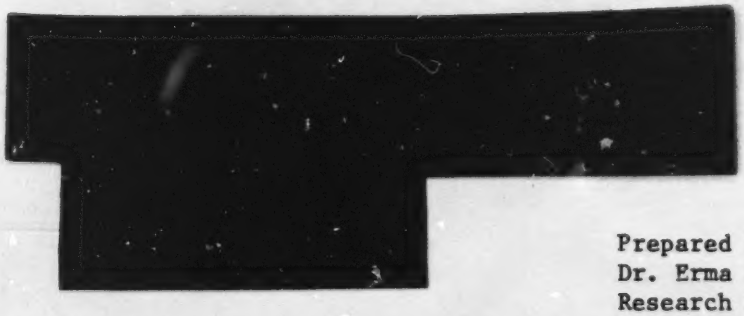

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September, 1981

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Research Branch has completed an evaluation of the first two years of the English-Ukrainian Bilingual Program for the Program Development Directorate of the Department of Education. The evaluation included: an assessment of students' skills in both the Ukrainian and English languages; an assessment of students' progress in the elementary school program overall; measurement of attitudes toward the program among parents, teachers, and principals who were involved directly in the program; an evaluation of the perceptions of superintendents; and, the development of a model for assessing costs of the program.

This summary report outlines the findings of the evaluation to date, and provides information relevant to the concerns of those individuals interested in the program.

The research team responsible for conducting this study, Erma Chapman (Project Leader), Dan Haughey, Susan Weeda, and myself, wish to express our appreciation to the numerous people who assisted at various stages throughout this study.

In particular, we wish to thank the students, parents, teachers, principals and superintendents whose co-operation and assistance enabled the study to be conducted. Their support and co-operation were vital to the completion of the evaluation.

The Research team would also like to thank the Manitoba Parents for Ukrainian Education, especially Terry Prychitko and Myron Spolsky, for their assistance with the questionnaire which was distributed to parents. Finally, appreciation is extended to Stephania Yurkiwsky and Karl Fast of the Department of Education, Program Development Directorate, for their assistance at various stages of the evaluation.

M.P. Yakimishyn
Director of Research

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I. INTRODUCTION

In September, 1979, an English-Ukrainian Bilingual Program was implemented on a pilot basis in one Grade One class in each of three school divisions in Manitoba. Funding for pilot classes was provided by the provincial Department of Education. Over and above the three pilot classes, the Minister of Education, Hon. Keith A. Cosens, also approved a number of classes established through local initiative in three additional school divisions in September 1979 and 1980. These classes were funded by the divisions in which they were instituted. The English-Ukrainian Bilingual Program could be implemented, within the guidelines, to the extent desired by the local school board.

The bilingual program, a three year pilot program based on the Manitoba curriculum, uses Ukrainian as the language of instruction for approximately 50 per cent of instructional time in Grades One through Three. For those students in Kindergarten, all instructional time is conducted in Ukrainian, except in cases where the teacher considers it necessary to modify this arrangement to ensure the students' development of English language arts.

In order to meet the needs of the Program Development Directorate in planning for the future of the program, the Research Branch was requested to determine the degree to which program objectives had been achieved. Although the additional classes were financed locally, they were comparable in all other respects to pilot classes, and, therefore, were included in the evaluation.

The questions which were addressed in the evaluation are presented in Section II of this summary. In Section III, definitions of terms used in the report and a brief outline of the research methods employed are presented. Findings of the evaluation can be found in Section IV, and conclusions in Section V.

II. THE QUESTIONS

The research questions addressed in the summary report were as follows:

1. To what extent have students in Kindergarten, Grade One, and Grade Two acquired skills in:
   (a) Ukrainian language arts;
   (b) English language arts; and,
   (c) the primary school program as a whole?
2. To what extent have students acquired an awareness of Ukrainian cultural heritage in Canada?
3. What are the attitudes of parents, teachers, principals, and superintendents toward the English-Ukrainian Bilingual Program?

III. DEFINITIONS AND METHODS

Definitions

For the purposes of the summary report, the following definitions apply:

Bilingual Program Students - refers to students who were enrolled in the English-Ukrainian Bilingual Program.

Regular Program Students - refers to students who were enrolled in English unilingual classes and were selected by principals to serve as a comparison group in the assessment of skill development.

Significant - refers to the nature of the outcome of statistical tests performed on skill assessments. "Significant" refers to the probability that any differences in scores on skill tests between bilingual and regular program students were due to the bilingual program, rather than due to a chance occurrence.

Ukrainian Language Tests - refer to assessment tests of skill development in the Ukrainian language, as developed by the Edmonton Public School Board, and adapted for use in Manitoba.

Methods

In order to assess the development of Ukrainian language skills, the Ukrainian language consultant for the Department of Education administered the Ukrainian

Language Tests to each child in the bilingual program during either May or June of 1981. English language skills were assessed among bilingual and regular program students using a variety of commercial tests.[1] Teachers in each classroom administered the English achievement tests at the end of each school year. In addition to the tests of Ukrainian and English languages, teachers were asked to report either "satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory" progress for the primary school subjects of arithmetic, language arts, and science and social studies for students in either the bilingual or regular program. Scores of students in the bilingual program on English language arts tests and the overall primary program were compared to scores of students in their school who were in the regular program.

Parents, teachers, and principals completed questionnaires which were developed by Research Branch personnel, in conjunction with staff from Program Development. Representatives from the Manitoba Parents for Ukrainian Education association provided useful comments in the development of the questionnaire which was sent to parents. Questionnaires were designed to assess attitudes toward the program, and to evaluate perceptions of children's awareness of the Ukrainian cultural heritage in Canada. Interviews were conducted with the school superintendents in the six divisions where the program had been implemented.

Analysis

Several statistical tools which were appropriate for the evaluation of skill assessment results were employed. Within the summary report, average scores are presented. When differences in average scores of bilingual and regular program students existed, the significance of these according to statistical analyses have been indicated.

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[1] The tests which were employed included: Metropolitan Readiness Test; Metropolitan Achievement Test - Primer Level; Metropolitan Achievement Test - Primary I Level; Metropolitan Achievement Test - Primary II Level; and, Gates-MacGinitie Reading Readiness Test.

IV. THE FINDINGS

The findings of the evaluation are presented in the same order as the questions which are listed in Section II of the summary report.

A. Skill Assessment

1. Ukrainian Language

A variety of language skills were assessed. The average scores, for each skill which was assessed, for students who were in Kindergarten, Grade One, and Grade Two during 1980/81 are presented respectively in Figures 1 to 3. The assessment consisted of four (Kindergarten and Grade One) or five (Grade Two) subtests. The "Vocabulary Identification" subtest was designed for group administration. Students were given a set of pictures for each question, and were required to circle the picture which matched the word read by the teacher/test administrator. The remaining subtests were administered on an individual basis. For the "Oral Vocabulary" subtest, children were presented with pictures, and asked for the correct Ukrainian name. On the "Directions" subtest, students were required to follow directions which were presented in Ukrainian. For the "Comprehension" subtest, children were presented with a picture, asked questions concerning the picture in Ukrainian, and required to reply in Ukrainian. On the "Reading Comprehension" subtest, children read a short written passage in Ukrainian, and replied to questions about the passage in English.

Except for one class of children in Grade One who had attended a Ukrainian Kindergarten, scores for children in Kindergarten and Grade One represent the amount of Ukrainian learned following one year of instruction in the language. As can be seen from Figures 1 and 2 for students in Kindergarten and Grade One, respectively, the average scores for identifying Ukrainian words and following directions in Ukrainian, were at least 70 per cent after one year of Ukrainian. Children did not perform as well on the

tests in which they were asked to speak Ukrainian (oral vocabulary and comprehension) after only one year of Ukrainian.

FIGURE 1

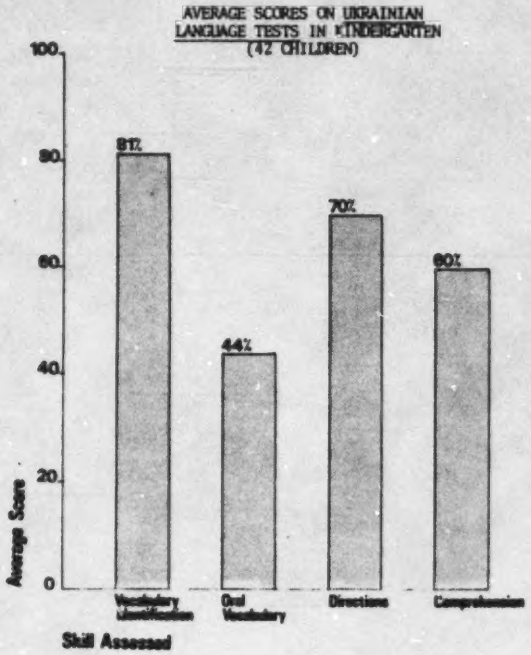
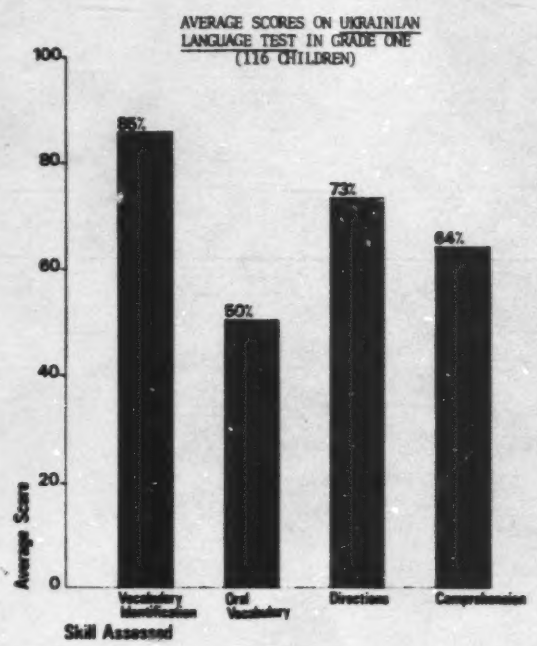
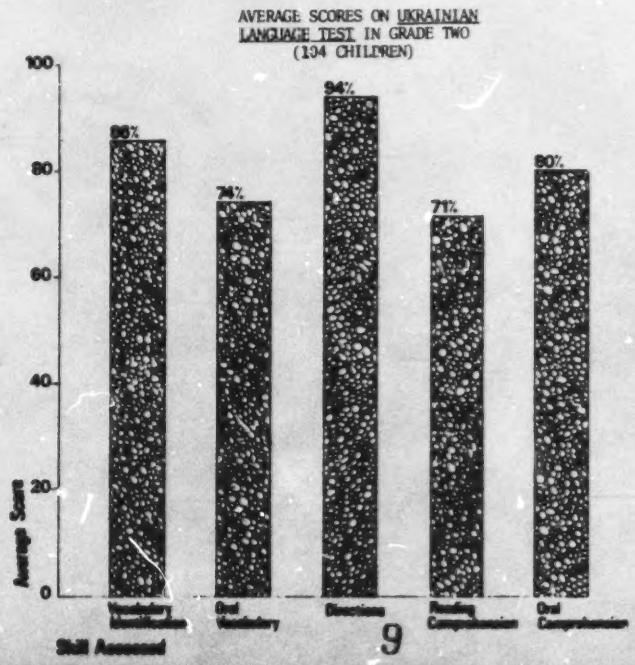


FIGURE 2



A more difficult test of Ukrainian language skills was administered to children who were in Grade Two. The test results indicated (Figure 3) that after two years of instruction in Ukrainian the students had average scores above 70 per cent, not only in understanding spoken Ukrainian, but also in speaking and reading Ukrainian.

FIGURE 3



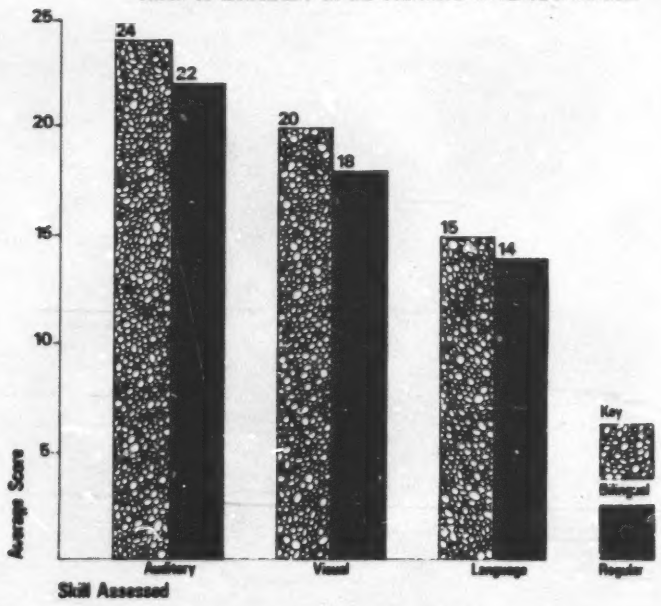
2. English Language

Because of the variety of tests which were used by the schools, results of English language skills assessment could not be presented simply by grade level. Consequently, the results for each of the skills are presented in Figures 4 to 8, according to the type of test instrument employed.

Average scores on the Metropolitan Readiness Test were assessed in Kindergarten, before students were enrolled in the bilingual program (Figure 4). None of the differences which were apparent between the students who subsequently entered either the bilingual or regular program were significant when submitted to statistical analyses.

FIGURE 4

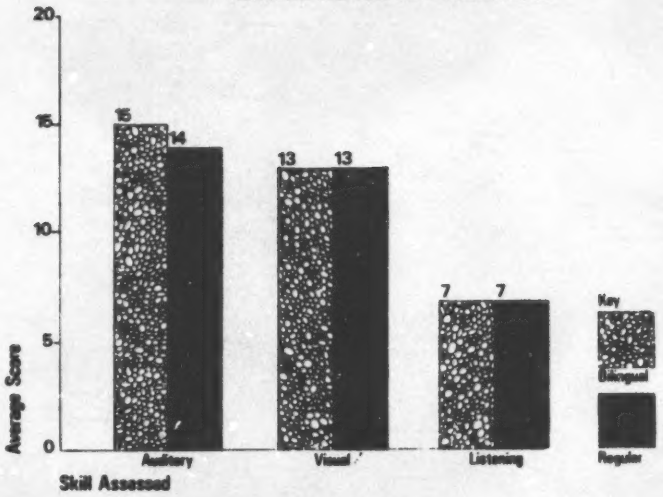
AVERAGE SCORES ON THE METROPOLITAN READINESS TEST
PRIOR TO ENROLLMENT IN THE BILINGUAL OR REGULAR PROGRAM



Average scores on the Gates-MacGinitie Test (Figure 5) were assessed on a group of students who attended a Ukrainian Kindergarten, and on a group of students who attended a regular Kindergarten. The difference between groups of students on the Auditory skill test was not statistically significant. As can be seen in Figure 5, no differences were found on the Visual and Listening tests.

FIGURE 5

AVERAGE SCORES ON THE GATES-MACGINITIE READINESS TEST FOR STUDENTS ATTENDING A UKRAINIAN AND REGULAR KINDERGARTEN



Students' English skills were assessed in Grade One using either the Primer (Figure 6) or Primary I (Figure 7) Level of the Metropolitan Achievement Test. Although differences between scores of students in the bilingual and regular programs are apparent in the graphs, none of the differences was significant statistically.

FIGURE 6

AVERAGE SCORES ON THE METROPOLITAN ACHIEVEMENT TEST,
PRIMER LEVEL FOR STUDENTS IN THE
BILINGUAL AND REGULAR PROGRAMS

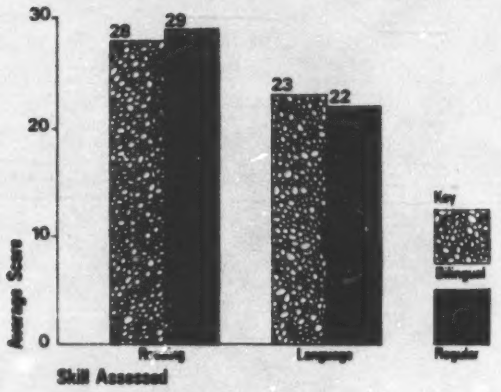
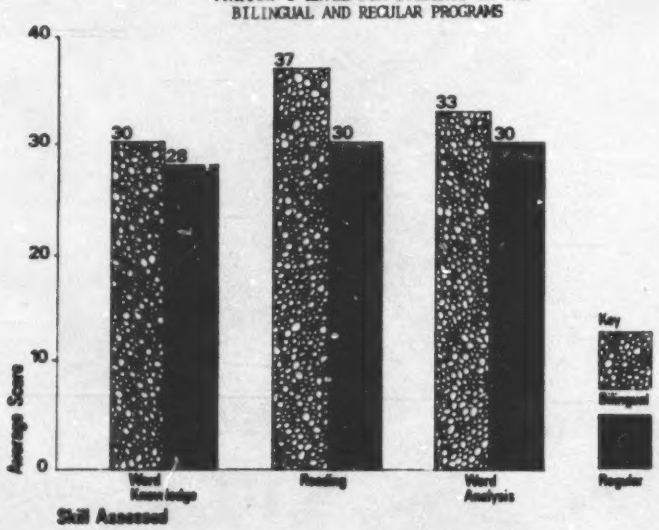


FIGURE 7

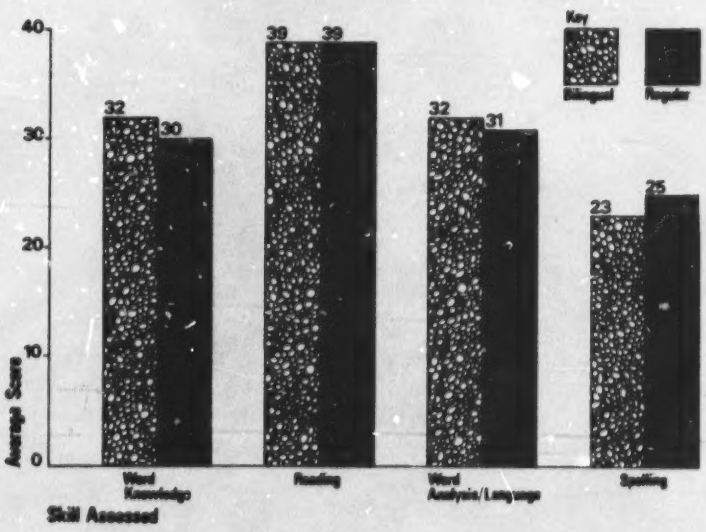
AVERAGE SCORES ON THE METROPOLITAN ACHIEVEMENT TEST,
PRIMARY I LEVEL FOR STUDENTS IN THE
BILINGUAL AND REGULAR PROGRAMS



The Primary II level of the Metropolitan Achievement Test was employed to measure English language skills of bilingual and regular program students in Grade Two (Figure 8). Differences in average scores on the Word Knowledge, Word Analysis/Language, and Spelling tests between the two groups of students were not significant.

FIGURE 8

AVERAGE SCORES ON THE METROPOLITAN ACHIEVEMENT TEST, PRIMARY II LEVEL FOR STUDENTS IN THE BILINGUAL AND REGULAR PROGRAMS

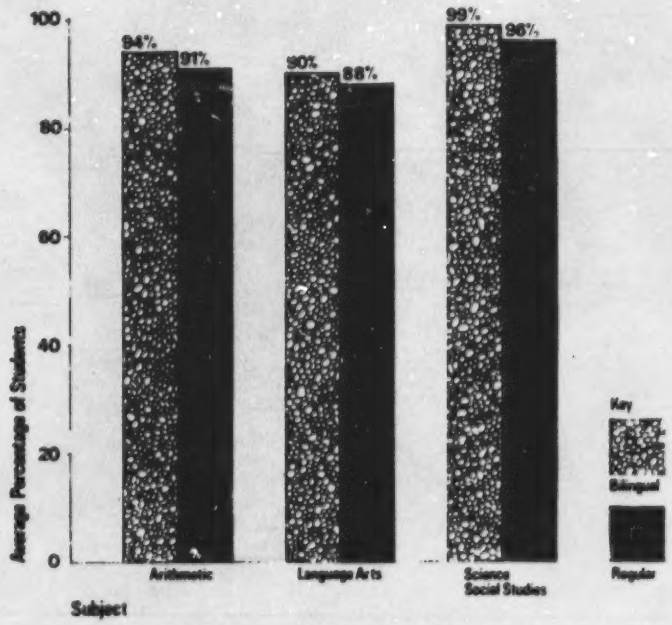


3. Primary Program Subjects

The percentage of students in both programs, whom teachers reported were progressing satisfactorily in the primary program subjects of arithmetic, language arts, and science and social studies, are presented in Figure 9. Because of the similarity in scores, results were collapsed across Grades One and Two. Apparent differences were not significant.

FIGURE 9

AVERAGE PERCENTAGES OF STUDENTS PERFORMING "SATISFACTORILY" BY SUBJECT AREA AND PROGRAM



B. Awareness of Ukrainian Cultural Heritage

Parents and teachers were asked whether they thought that their child or students had developed a greater awareness of the Ukrainian cultural heritage in Canada since enrolling in the program. Ninety-eight per cent of the parents and all of the teachers replied positively.

C. Attitudes of Parents, Teachers, and Principals

Because different questions were asked of parents, teachers, and principals, findings are presented separately for each group of respondents.

1. Parents

Questionnaires were distributed to 253 parents, and 203 completed forms were returned to the Research Branch. That is, 80 per cent of those parents who had a child enrolled in the bilingual program responded to the questionnaire.

Eighty-eight per cent of the parental respondents reported that their child was of Ukrainian descent. In addition, Ukrainian was spoken at least half of the time in 23 per cent of the respondents' homes. Seventy-six per cent of the respondents' children regularly interacted with Ukrainian-speaking people.

Most of the parents reported that they were "very satisfied" with: the English-Ukrainian Bilingual Program (83%); their child's development of English language skills (80%); and, their child's development of Ukrainian language skills (85%).

Parents who were of Ukrainian descent were more likely to enroll their child in the bilingual program in order for the child to learn the Ukrainian language (88%) or to learn about Ukrainian culture (64%). In contrast, parents who were not of Ukrainian descent were more likely to enroll their child in the bilingual program in order for the child to learn another language (81%).

Most parents (91%) would continue to enroll their child in the English-Ukrainian Bilingual Program if the program were extended to Grades Four to Six. In addition, many parents would recommend the program to others (92%). Ninety-five per cent of parents with pre-school children reported that they would enroll their children in the bilingual program.

Approximately 60 per cent of parents were satisfied, to some degree, with the availability of Ukrainian materials, such as storybooks and records, for their child.

Some parents reported that their child had become more enthusiastic about learning other languages (60%) and about other cultures (45%) since being enrolled in the bilingual program. Almost all parents (98%) reported that they saw benefits in the program for their child; some parents (14%) reported that they saw drawbacks in the program for their child. In addition, 97 per cent of parents reported that they would like to see the English-Ukrainian Bilingual Program extended to Grades Four to Six.

2. Teachers

All of the teachers (13) involved in the bilingual program responded to the questionnaire.

Most of the teachers were "very satisfied" with: the English-Ukrainian Bilingual Program (11 of 13)[3]; their students' development of English language skills (9 of 13); and, their students' development of Ukrainian language skills (9 of 11).

In general, bilingual program teachers felt integrated with other teachers in the school (12 of 13). All of the teachers were satisfied with their level of integration with other teachers.

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[3] This indicates that 11 of the 13 teachers responded that they were "very satisfied".

Teachers of Grade One and Two classes reported that they used Ukrainian as the language of instruction for 41 to 50 per cent of the school day. Kindergarten teachers reported that they instructed in Ukrainian for about 70 per cent of the day. A majority of the bilingual teachers reported that they spent two thirds or more of their preparation time on the Ukrainian portion of their program (5 of 8).

August and September inservices were attended by a majority of Ukrainian teachers (7 of 11), who generally found them to be helpful. Curriculum committee meetings were considered "very helpful" by six of the eight teachers who participated.

Although teachers generally were satisfied with curriculum materials available (10 of 11), a majority of teachers reported that support materials were inadequate (8 of 11).

All teachers reported that they saw benefits in the program for their students; about half of the teachers (6 of 13) reported that they saw drawbacks in the program for their students. All of the teachers thought that the bilingual program should be extended to Grades Four to Six. Teachers' most common concern, if the program were extended, was related to the availability of materials (7 of 13).

3. Principals

All of the principals (8) responded to the questionnaire. Most of the principals stated that they were "very satisfied" with the program (7 of 8). All of them reported that students benefitted from the bilingual program; a few (2 of 8) felt that the program did contain drawbacks for the students.

The majority of principals (6 of 8) were satisfied with the financial support they had received, and all were satisfied with the non-financial support they had received, especially from parents.

Principals reported that they had no major difficulties in the administrative areas of: transportation; level of integration of staff and students in the bilingual program with the remainder of the school population; lunch hour arrangements; scheduling; accounting; public relations; parents' demands; or, remedial resources. Half of the eight principals were dissatisfied with the current availability of Ukrainian language materials, and saw availability as a major concern, if the bilingual program were extended.

Staffing was an area of concern to seven of the eight principals, especially if the program were either expanded to more classes or extended to Grades Four to Six. La k of teachers who are fluent in the Ukrainian language was the main focus of their concern.

All eight of the principals felt that the English-Ukrainian Bilingual Program was successful and that it should be extended to Grades Four to Six.

D. Perceptions of Superintendents

Information about various aspects of the program, obtained through interviewing of all six superintendents involved in the program, is presented in the following summary form:

1. Policy

School boards are in the process of refining policies to reflect public interest and demand for second language instruction. This need for refinement will be accelerated if the program is extended to Grades Four to Six.

2. Costs

A majority of superintendents, (4 of 6), perceived the program to cost more than the conventional Kindergarten to Grade Three program. This additional cost for the program was attributed to factors including: more expensive instructional materials; transportation; support staff; and, additional staffing costs. Of the above factors, the additional staffing cost appeared to be the most critical factor.

3. Personnel

Each of the superintendents interviewed stated that the teachers involved in the program were "excellent". These teachers were praised for their commitment, performance, endurance, and excellent teaching. The general viewpoint was that the success of the Program can be attributed to the quality of teaching and the teacher commitment to the program.

However, superintendents indicated that staff recruitment could pose a problem as the program expands. Some divisions are, in fact, currently experiencing problems recruiting staff. These problems include recruitment of full-time, part-time and substitute staff.

4. Public Relations

At each of the schools where the program was offered, parent committees had been active in addressing the public relations task. It was reported that, in each of these cases, the leadership provided by the parent group was carried out in co-operation with the school division. The parent committees conducted public relations campaigns through "mall displays", local T.V., special school events, media advertising and school-centred activities. Superintendents perceived public relations to be a joint venture with the parent committees.

5. Parent Committees

Parent committees play a important role in terms of financial support and public information. The parent committees function very positively and co-operatively with the boards. They do not function as pressure groups, but rather as facilitating groups.

6. Program Extension

All superintendents supported extension of the program to the end of Grade Six. Reasons cited in support of the extension included: "very positive parent reaction"; "need for strong language base in the division"; "success of the program"; and, "obligation to provide the students with at least six years of language exposure in order to develop language fluency".

V. THE CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions are listed in order of the questions to be answered by the evaluation.

1. (a) After one year of instruction in the Ukrainian language, children scored 70 per cent or above, on average, on tests of understanding spoken Ukrainian. Following two years of instruction, children scored 70 per cent or above, on average, on tests of understanding, speaking, and reading Ukrainian.

   (b) Students in the bilingual program did at least as well as their counterparts in the regular program on tests of English language arts.

   (c) Students in the English-Ukrainian Bilingual Program did at least as well as their counterparts in the regular program in each subject area within the overall primary school program.

2. On the basis of opinions expressed by parents and teachers, it can be concluded that students in the English-Ukrainian Bilingual Program are acquiring an awareness of the Ukrainian cultural heritage in Canada through their participation in the program.

3. It was concluded that parents, teachers, principals, and superintendents had positive attitudes toward the English-Ukrainian Bilingual Program. Moreover, it was concluded that parents, teachers, and administrators want to see the program extended to the end of Grade Six.